Met Office

August 2013

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1981-2010.

UK overview

The month opened with some unsettled weather, but a southerly feed of hot and humid air led to very high temperatures across South East England on the 1st, giving the highest temperatures of the year so far. Many areas received plenty of showery rain over the first few days of August, with some persistent heavy rain and torrential downpours in Wales on the 4th. The rest of the month saw generally quieter weather, with temperatures near average. Frontal systems brought rain at times, mainly to the north-west, but there was also plenty of fine, sunny weather, particularly in the south and east. The main exception was Saturday 24 August when 30-50 mm of rain fell across parts of eastern England, with torrential downpours causing flash flooding in Essex.

The UK mean temperature was 15.6 °C, which is 0.7 °C above the 1981-2010 average. The rainfall pattern was variable, with some parts of the UK notably dry for the month overall - for example southern England, parts of Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Norfolk, Northern Ireland and parts of southern and eastern Scotland. Other areas were wetter than average - for example parts of the Pennines, Essex, west Cornwall and South Wales. The UK overall received 81% of the long-term average rainfall amount, making this the driest August since 2003. There was 97% of the long-term average hours of bright sunshine.

A maximum temperature of 34.1 °C was recorded at Heathrow on the 1st, the highest UK temperature since July 2006. A minimum temperature of 0.2 °C was recorded at Kinbrace (Sutherland) on the 5th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 GMT on the 5th, 111.2 mm of rain fell at Glyntawe (Powys). A wind gusts of 68 mph was recorded at Needles Old Battery (Isle of Wight) on the 17th.

Weather impacts

Temperatures on 1 August reached 31 to 32 °C across much of central and south-east England, and it was hotter than during the recent July heat wave. Heathrow reached 34.1 °C and many stations recorded their highest temperature of the year. However, the weather was very different in the far north and west with cloud and rain.

Localised torrential downpours occurred at times through the month. Flash flooding from heavy rainfall in Cornwall in early August made some roads impassable, and damaged treatment rooms at the Newquay Community Hospital. In south Essex flash flooding on the 24th resulted in rainwater and sewage inundating hundreds of properties and causing significant disruption in the region; 47.6 mm was recorded at Shoeburyness in a 4 hour period in the early afternoon. This affected local seaside businesses, falling as it did over the bank holiday weekend.

England diary of highlights

The month opened with temperatures rising above 30 °C across much of central and southern England on 1st and reaching 34.1 °C at Heathrow (Greater London). After this temperatures did not generally exceed what would be expected for the time of year. For most areas August gave a mix of fine summer weather interspersed with showers, at times heavy and thundery.

Temperatures for the month were slightly above average, with the mean temperature for England 0.7 °C above the 1981-2010 average. Areas stretching from the south through the Midlands to Humberside and Norfolk experienced below average rainfall, but heavy localised showers during the month led to monthly totals above average in the Pennines, parts of Cornwall, Essex and Kent. England overall received 85% of average. Sunshine totals were mostly near average but slightly higher towards the east and south with 103% of average for England overall.

1st to 4th:

A hot and sunny day on the 1st with the temperatures reaching 34.1 °C at Heathrow (Greater London). A band of patchy rain spread from the west on the 2nd. There were some thunderstorms and torrential downpours but temperatures still reached 26 °C in many areas. On the 3rd it was generally bright although there were scattered showers in the west and it was cooler in the north. The 4th was a day of sunshine and showers with the heaviest in the north and west. Temperatures fell back to nearer average for the time of year.

5th to 18th:

The 5th was very unsettled with heavy rain for northern and western areas and showers with thunder for southern areas; Boulmer (Northumberland) recorded 39 mm. The 6th was generally dry with sunny spells although showers reached the south-west during the afternoon. The 7th was again mainly dry and sunny. It was generally another dry and sunny day on the 8th although scattered heavy showers broke out in the north-west in the evening. Overnight rain cleared the south-east early on the 9th to leave a dry and sunny day. A ridge of high pressure on the 10th made for another settled day. There were some scattered showers for the north on the 11th and 12th but the south was dry with sunny spells, feeling cooler in a north-westerly breeze. Central areas saw light and patchy rain on the 13th. A band of rain moved slowly east during the 14th although the far south-east stayed dry. It was a day of sunny spells and scattered showers on the 15th although more persistent rain spread into north-western areas in the late afternoon. On the 16th a band of rain spread east for central and southern areas, clearing by early afternoon. The 17th began with rain in the west spreading erratically east during the day in a fresh south-westerly wind. A brighter day on the 18th with scattered showers mainly for southern coastal areas.

19th to 24th:

High pressure edged in from the southwest on the 19th to give a fine day. The 20th remained dry and settled with temperatures reaching the mid 20s in the south-east. An area of low pressure moved in from the west on the 21st resulting in showers for the Midlands and south-west. There was rain for much of the day on the 22nd in the south-east and thunderstorms broke out in the evening over South Yorkshire. Rain reached western areas by midday on the 23rd, moving east during the afternoon. A very unsettled day in the southeast on the 24th with rain, some heavy, for much of the day. Shoeburyness (Essex) saw 58mm with much of this falling during a 4 hour spell in the afternoon.

25th to 31st:

The 25th was generally more settled although some heavy showers broke out in Oxfordshire and Wiltshire in the late afternoon. The 26th was mainly dry and sunny with temperatures reaching the mid 20s. A dry, sunny and warm day on the 27th, though with scattered showers in Devon during the late afternoon. The 28th was again dry, sunny and warm. There was more cloud around on the 29th with patchy, light rain for western areas. A dry start on the 30th but there was patchy rain in the north and a band of showers for southern areas later in the day. The 31st was mainly dry and bright.

Wales diary of highlights

The month began warm and dry before turning wet and unsettled on 4th and 5th, with heavy rain at times. It was generally drier from 6th to 11th, then turning somewhat more unsettled again mid-month with rain and

showers. There were some warm and sunny spells towards the end of the month.

Temperatures for the month were slightly above average. The mean temperature for Wales was 0.6 °C above the 1981-2010 average, similar to August 2012. Rainfall totals for the month were close to average with 101%. Sunshine was slightly below average with 93%.

1st to 3rd:

The 1st was mainly dry and sunny with more cloud on western coasts. It was very warm with a maximum of 28.7 °C at Cardiff Bute Park. Warm with sunshine and isolated showers on the 2nd and 3rd.

4th to 5th:

Cooler on 4th with some heavy rain at times, Porthmadog (Gwynedd) recorded 61.0 mm in the 24 hours ending 0900 GMT on the 5th. Further heavy rain on the 5th lasted until late afternoon.

6th to 11th:

The 6th was dry with variable cloud and some sunshine, and mainly dry and sunny on 7th. Sunshine and some light showers on the 8th. It was cloudy on 9th but became sunnier in the afternoon. The 10th and 11th were mainly dry with variable cloud amounts.

12th to 23rd:

Sunshine and showers in the north of the country on the 12th. Some rain mid morning on 13th followed by more cloud with some sunshine. The 14th was mainly overcast with rain in the early morning becoming showery by the afternoon. Periods of rain and heavy showers throughout the 15th, with 55.4 mm recorded at Trawsgoed (Ceredigion). It was generally dry and sunny on the 16th. Some periods of rain occurred during 17th with little sunshine. The 18th was mainly dry and sunny with a few isolated showers. It was mainly dry with some sunshine on 19th and 20th. Some patchy rain and showers with occasional sunny spells on 21st. Warm and sunny on the 22nd with 25.3 °C recorded at Llysdinam (Powys). 23rd was cloudy with outbreaks of rain.

24th to 31st:

It was dry with more sunshine on the coast during the 24th and 25th. The 26th was warm and sunny. On the 27th, there was some slight rain in the north-west and some fog in the morning, otherwise it was dry with sunny spells. Dry with sunshine on the 28th. Light showers otherwise generally cloudy but dry on the 29th. The 30th was similar with some more sunshine in the north. The 31st was sunny and dry.

Scotland diary of highlights

The month saw a mix of weather for Scotland, with rain and showers but also some dry, bright periods. The wettest weather was confined largely to the north-west.

Temperatures for the month were slightly above average for most areas. The mean temperature was 0.6 °C above the 1981-2010 average, making it the warmest August since 2004. Monthly rainfall totals were rather below normal in the south and east of the country but closer to average in the north-west. Overall Scotland received 76% of average rainfall, the driest August since 2003. Sunshine totals were somewhat below average, particularly in the south, with 88% of average overall.

1st to 16th:

Rain for most areas on 1st cleared slowly later in the day. Scattered showers on 2nd and 3rd, some of them heavy. More showers on the 4th but dry for many areas. Heavy rain in the south-east on the 5th but mostly dry elsewhere. Showers in the west on the 6th but dry in the east. Rain for most areas on 7th. Dry at first on 8th

but rain spreading in from the west later. Scattered showers for most areas on 9th. A few scattered showers on the 10th but many areas stayed dry. Blustery showers or heavy rain for many places on the 11th especially the north and west. Scattered showers again on the 12th but many areas staying dry and bright. Mainly dry on the 13th but some scattered showers in the north. Dry and bright at first on the 14th with some showers later. Some scattered showers on the 15th with rain in the south later. Mainly dry on the 16th with only a few scattered showers.

17th to 24th:

Wet and windy for most areas on the 17th with a max gust of 52 mph at Loch Glascarnoch (Highland). It was windy again on the 18th with scattered showers in the west but mostly dry in the east. Mostly dry but breezy on 19th, with only a few scattered showers. Mostly dry at first on the 20th but rain pushed in from the west later in the day. Showers or longer spells of rain on the 21st for many areas but not as windy. Mostly dry on the 22nd with high pressure across the country. Rain in the west at first on the 23rd with some scattered showers later. Dry for most areas on the 24th but rain in the east later in the day.

25th to 31st:

Dry on the 25th and 26th with bright or sunny spells but some mist or fog in the east at first. Some rain overnight and at first on the 27th and then, apart from a few scattered showers, becoming mostly dry. Dry again for most areas on the 28th. There was some patchy rain from weak fronts on the 29th but otherwise mostly dry. The westerly wind picked up on the 30th and an erratic band of rain spread from the west during the afternoon. There were scattered showers in a fresh westerly wind on the 31st.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

As pressure remained relatively high for much of the month, most days were predominantly dry, although rather cloudy at times and interspersed with showers or periods of rain in many areas.

Temperatures for the month were slightly above average, with the mean temperature 0.7 °C above the 1981-2010 average. Monthly rainfall totals were well below average, with 58% overall, making this the driest August since 2003; the south-east was particularly dry. However, it was a rather dull month with 83% of average sunshine.

1st to 10th:

The 1st was a cloudy day with periods of rain or showers. Sunny with a few showers in the afternoon on the 2nd and a bright day with occasional showers followed on the 3rd. The 4th to 6th were fine and settled but with limited sunshine on the 5th and 6th. Cloud and light rain affected northern coastal areas on the 7th but it was dry elsewhere. A dry, cloudy start on the 8th but some rain spread from the west in the afternoon, clearing in the early hours of the 9th to leave a dry but rather cloudy day. A dry, fine day on the 10th with a few scattered showers in the afternoon.

11th to 21st:

The 11th was dry and bright but some rain spread from the north-west in the afternoon. The 12th saw a mixture of sunny intervals and scattered showers which were heavy at times in the north-east. The 13th was mainly dry but rather cloudy. On the 14th, rain spread to all areas from the west during the morning, continuing into the 15th but quickly cleared all areas apart from the north. During the late afternoon a band of rain then showers, heavy in places, moved south-eastwards; 41.4 mm was recorded at Aldergrove (County Antrim). A brighter and drier day on 16th. Rain at first on the 17th cleared to scattered showers in the afternoon in a fresh south-westerly breeze. The 18th started with some rain which cleared during the morning to leave a dry, bright and breezy afternoon. Further rain to start the 19th, clearing to leave a mainly dry and sunny afternoon.

Continuing dry into the 20th but rain quickly spread to all areas, persisting overnight but clearing to more showery weather for most on the 21st.

22nd to 31st:

Early rain on the 22nd but then generally fine and dry. Cloudy with rain, heavy in places for much of the 23rd, but brighter in the east. The 24th was generally dry and cloudy before rain moved into the west and scattered showers developed in the east. The 25 to 30th were mostly dry and cloudy with only scattered periods of showery rain and in the south-east there was more in the way of sunshine. Temperature reached 23.5 °C at Murlough (County Down) on the 29th. The 31st was mostly dry and sunny with just a few scattered showers.

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